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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 000540

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/AND, EUR/ERA, S/CT

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [VE](#) [CO](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: VENEZUELA/NETHERLANDS: DEMARCHE ON VENEZUELA'S
WEAPONS ACQUISITION

REF: STATE 25063

Classified By: Political Counselor Andrew Schofer for reasons 1.4 (b) a
nd (d).

[11](#). (C) Poloff delivered reftel points to Dimitri Vogelaar, MFA Venezuela/Colombia/Peru Desk officer on February 25. Vogelaar said that the EU Heads of Mission (HOMs) in Caracas had discussed this issue in preparation for the March 8 COLAT meeting in Brussels and concluded that it was not an issue of immediate concern. The Dutch have not raised the matter with the GOV bilaterally.

[12](#). (C) Vogelaar said that the Dutch believe Venezuela has a good tracking system for labeling and monitoring weapons and for insuring they are not diverted from legitimate military entities. He noted that this was one of the points cited by the EU HOMs in their discussion. The HOMs understood that the guns in question would be used to arm Venezuelan reserves sent to enforce the Colombia/Venezuela border. Vogelaar added that he was not aware of any Colombian objection to the purchase, leading to the conclusion that Colombia accepted the border reinforcement theory.

[13](#). (C) Finally, Vogelaar recalled that President Chavez had criticized the FARC at the time of the hand over of Granda, suggesting that Chavez would not be inclined to aid the FARC in general. Vogelaar observed, however, that the question of whether Chavez' criticism was "sustainable" remained open.
SOBEL